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AUTHOR	Glyer, Culver-Betty
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ABSTRACT

In fall 2001 staff of the Los Rios Community College District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with occupational deans, academic deans, and faculty to develop and administer a survey of former nursing (RN and LVN) students. The survey was designed to determine how well courses had met the needs of former nursing students who earned degrees and certificates. A total of 332 surveys were sent out; 147 were returned (response rate of 44.3%). More than half of respondents, 53.4% believed that their understanding of the nursing process as a result of their courses prepared them very well for employment. The five nursing skill areas in which students most often believed they were well prepared are listed, as are the five nursing skill areas in which they felt they were not prepared. Data also show the licensure and certification examinations students took after leaving the community colleges. Of the former nursing students who responded to the survey, 99.3% were currently working in health care, with 66.3% of those employed in the private sector. Salary and hourly wage information is provided, with a demographic profile of former students and a discussion of their educational plans and interests. (SLD)

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A Survey of Former Nursing (RN and LVN) Students
Summary Findings of Respondents District-Wide
August 2002

Office of Institutional Research
Los Rios Community College District

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A SURVEY OF FORMER NURSING (RN and LVN) STUDENTS

Summary Findings of Respondents District-wide

August 2002

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Table 1: Nursing Survey Rate of Return

	Total Surveys Mailed*	Total Surveys Returned	% Returned
ARC	141	73	51.8%
SCC	191	74	38.7%
TOTAL	332	147	44.3%

* Adjusted for undeliverable mail.

Of interest is the 23.1% of respondents who chose to answer the survey via the web. Highlights of the survey results follow. For further details please refer to the more comprehensive frequency distribution reports.

Skill Areas Where Former Nursing Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

Over half, 53.4%, of respondents believed that their understanding of the nursing process as a result of our Nursing programs prepared them very well for employment. Other Nursing skills, ranging from 52.1% to 45.2% of respondents who believed the courses prepared them very well, are summarized in Table 2. Only 0.7% to 5.5% felt they were not prepared in these five skills, with the remainder feeling adequately prepared.

Table 2: Nursing Skill Areas Where Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

Rank	Nursing Skills	% Very Prepared
1.	Understanding of Nursing Process	53.4%
2.	Patient Assessment Skills	52.1%
3.	Competency with Nursing Skills	47.9%
4.	Communication Skills (Speaking, Writing, Listening)	45.5%
5.	Ability to Work in a Team	45.2%

Skill Areas Where Former Nursing Students Believed They Were Not Prepared

Overall, students feel adequately or very prepared by their Nursing courses but there are four areas where 10% or more of the respondents believed they were not prepared. More respondents felt they were not prepared in IV Therapy Skills; 30.8% responded they were not prepared as a result of their Nursing courses in this skill area. Other areas where at least 10% of respondents felt did not prepare them are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Nursing Skill Areas Where Students Believed They Were Not Prepared

Rank	Nursing Skills	% Not Prepared
1.	IV Therapy Skills	30.8%
2.	Ability to Supervise Staff	29.0%
3.	Conflict Management	19.9%
4.	Ability to Delegate	11.6%

Nursing Certification and Licensing Examination Information

After leaving their Nursing programs at ARC and SCC, 95.8% of respondents from the RN program passed the NCLEX (RN) examination and are using the certification as a condition of employment. On average, respondents completed this examination within 2.6 months of completing their RN program. Of those respondents from the LVN program at SCC who took the NCLEX (LVN) exam, 70.5% indicated they passed the exam within an average 4.1 months of completing the LVN program. Table 4 illustrates other certification and licensing examinations students took after leaving our college and the average number of months between completing the program and taking the examination.

Table 4: Certification and Licensing Examinations Taken After Leaving our College

Certification and Licensing Examination	N=	Passed Exam & Using	Passed Exam & Not Using	Yes, But Did Not Pass	Average # of months between completing program & taking exam	Have Not Yet Taken Or Not Planning to Take
NCLEX: RN	119	95.8%	0.8%	0.8%	2.6	2.5%
NCLEX: LVN	44	70.5%	9.1%	0.0%	4.1	20.5%
Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)	61	67.2%	1.6%	0.0%	7.6	31.1%
Specialty Certification*	56	75.0%	5.4%	0.0%	5.7	19.7%
Specialty Certification*	22	68.2%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1	31.8%
Other Type of Exam	17	64.7%	5.9%	0.0%	6.0	29.4%

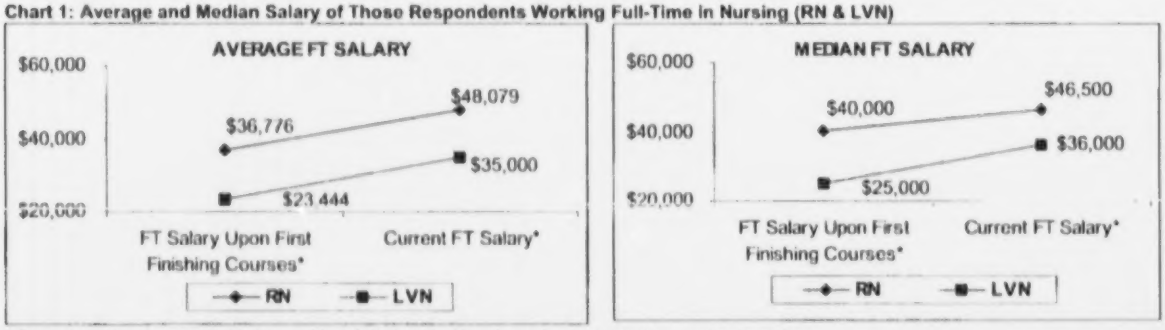
*** Respondents provided listings of types of specialty certifications and those are provided in a separate comment report.**

Employment and Salary Information

Of the former Nursing students who responded to the survey, 99.3% are currently working in the Healthcare field. Of those who are currently working, 66.3% are employed in the private sector while 13.0% are working within the public healthcare sector. Worth noting is the 16.3% of respondents who are working as contract employees within the Nursing industry.

Survey respondents were also asked a series of questions regarding their salary status in the Nursing field. Information provided from those who are now working full-time as Registered Nurses reveals an average full-time salary of $36,776 upon *first finishing* their Nursing (RN) program that increased to an average $48,079 within two years. Similarly, salaries of respondents who are now working full-time as LVNs reveal an average full-time salary of $23,444 upon first finishing their LVN program that increased to an average $35,000 within two years.

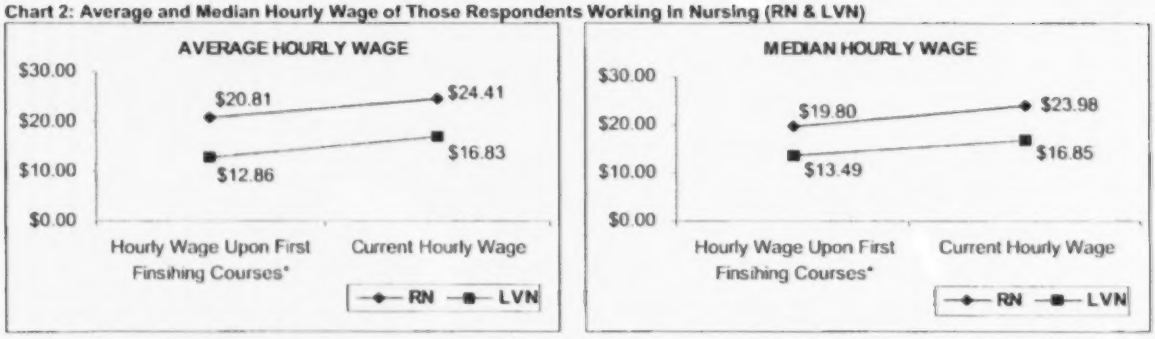
Chart 1: Average and Median Salary of Those Respondents Working Full-Time in Nursing (RN & LVN)



*** Based on those respondents working full-time in Nursing who provided annual salary data.**

Of additional interest is salary information based on hourly wage data provided by survey respondents. Those now working as RNs reveal an average hourly wage of $20.81 that increased to $24.41 within two years. Respondents working as RNs indicated an average 34.2 hours worked per week upon first finishing that increased to 37.3 hours per week within two years.

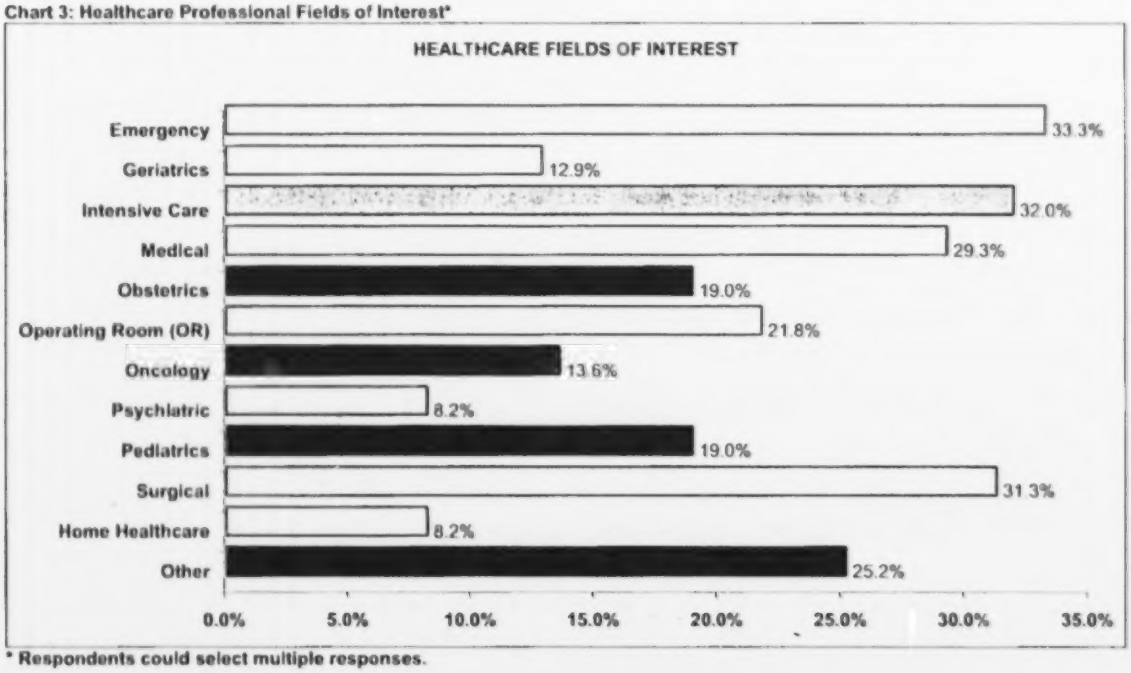
Chart 2: Average and Median Hourly Wage of Those Respondents Working in Nursing (RN & LVN)



Hourly wage information provided by those respondents who were former LVN students reveals an average hourly wage of $12.86 that increased to an average $16.83 within in two years. LVN respondents reported the 33.8 average hours worked per week upon first finishing their LVN program decreased slightly to an average of 32.3 hours per week within two years.

Chart 3 provides a flavor of the multiple interests former Nursing students have within the healthcare professional field, with emergency care, intensive care and surgery being the dominant fields of interest.

Chart 3: Healthcare Professional Fields of Interest*



* Respondents could select multiple responses.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the Nursing population from which the survey sample was drawn and the profile of survey respondents follow:

Table 5: Demographic Profile of Nursing Sample Population and Survey Respondents by Proportions

	Sample Population	Survey Respondents
Gender		
Female	88.6%	89.1%
Male	11.4%	10.9%
Ethnicity		
African American	10.1%	6.1%
Asian	8.8%	8.2%
Filipino	4.4%	1.4%
Latino	9.3%	10.9%
Native American	1.0%	1.4%
Pacific Islander	1.6%	0.7%
White	61.9%	70.7%
Other & Unknown	2.8%	0.7%
Age		
Under 18 years	0.0%	0.0%
18-20 years	0.3%	0.7%
21-24 years	10.4%	13.6%
25-29 years	25.1%	21.1%
30-39 years	43.5%	45.6%
40 and over	20.7%	19.0%
By Degree Type		
RN (120300)	84.2%	82.3%
LVN (120320)	14.5%	17.7%
Both RN and LVN	1.3%	0.0%

Educational Plans and Interests

Of interest are the current and future educational plans of former Nursing students who responded to the survey:

- 52.4% are currently taking or are interested in taking courses at a 4-year college or university
- Of those respondents who completed the LVN program at SCC, 34.6% are currently pursing or are interested in pursuing an RN program at either ARC or SCC
- Over half, 61.9% of respondents answered, yes, they would be interested in a short (about 9 hours) continuing education course related to the Healthcare profession at our colleges

This summary report was written by Betty Glyer-Culver, Research Analyst, LRCCD Office of Institutional Research (IR) and is based on research conducted by the "Former Student Follow-up Studies" team: research design, analysis and report writing -- Betty Glyer-Culver, Research Analyst; Web survey and SQL Server support and development -- Minh La, IT Analyst for Institutional Research; coordination of survey mailings -- Chue Lo-Yang, Secretary. The *Former Student Follow-up* Study Team gratefully acknowledges input related to survey and report development by IR Director, Judy Beachler, program-specific question development by the occupational education and academic area deans and faculty at the colleges and the District Office of Workforce and Economic Development under the direction of Sandy Kirschenmann for Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) funds which partially supported this project in compliance with funding requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. Additional copies of this report as well as the more comprehensive program level reports can be downloaded from our Web Site at: http://irweb.losrios.edu or by calling 916-568-3131.

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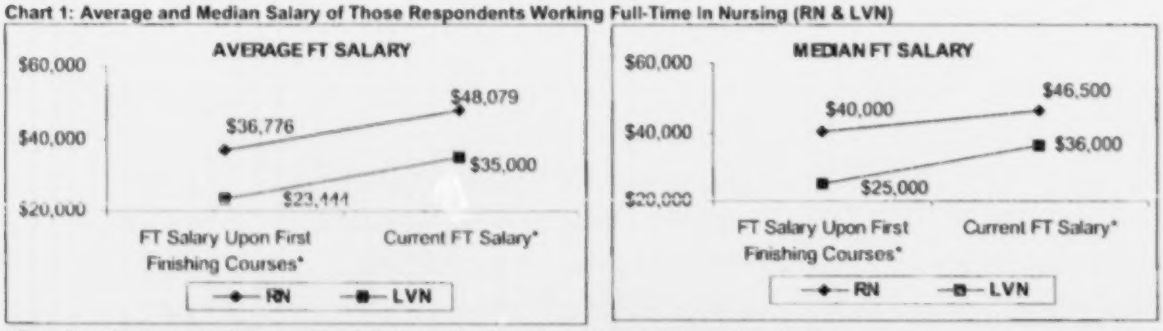

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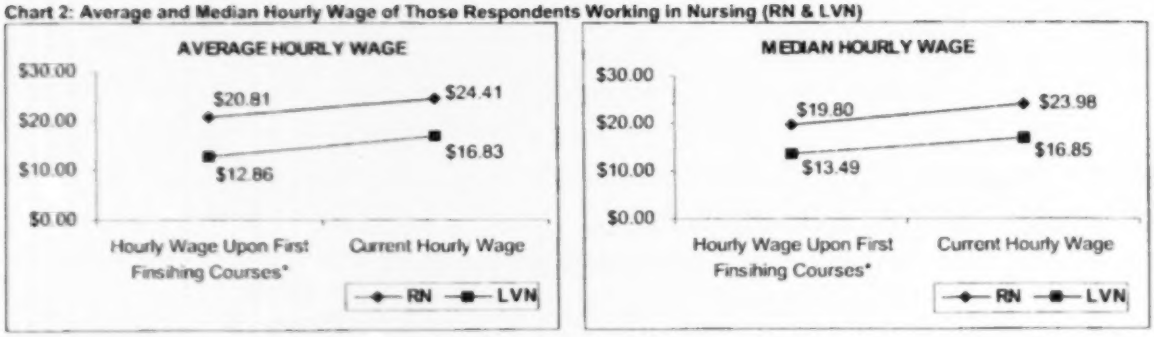

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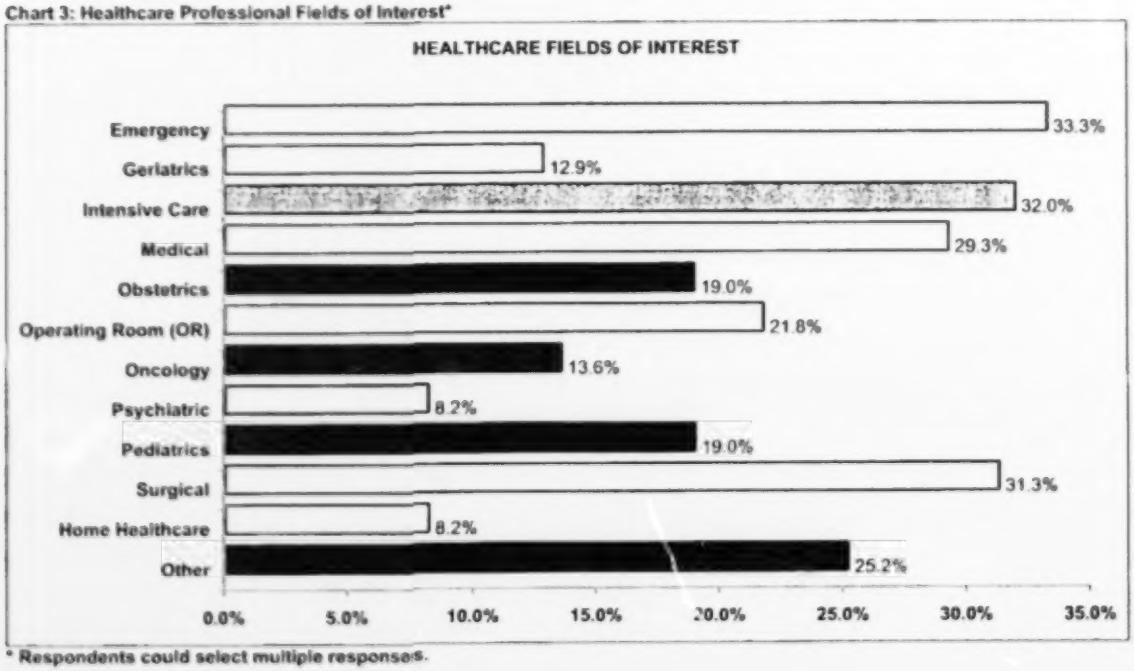

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